

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 693
By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the football team of
Fulton High School on capturing the 2003
TSSAA Class AAA State Championship.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and
commend those successful high school teams that, through their magnificent exploits, bring
honor to Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this state; and

WHEREAS, the Fulton High School Falcons achieved unmatched success during the
2003 season by winning the state football championship in TSSAA Class AAA; and

WHEREAS, they spent countless hours in the weight room and on the practice field in
preparation for the 2003 season and built upon their past successes to precipitate a
championship run; and

WHEREAS, the Falcons opened the season with an impressive 37-20 win over Carter,
and they maintained their focus throughout the season to post an impressive record of fourteen
wins and one loss; and

WHEREAS, Fulton's single loss occurred in the second game of the season and was
later avenged in a quarterfinal rematch, as they defeated Austin East 12-6 in the game that
mattered most; and

WHEREAS, this determined team carried tremendous momentum into the state playoffs
and stretched their winning streak to a dozen games as they entered the BlueCross Bowl in
Murfreesboro on December 6, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the Falcons posted a dominating 36-9 victory over Covington in the
championship game, thus establishing themselves unquestionably as the finest Tennessee
team in their classification and becoming the first state championship team in any sport in their
school's 53-year history; and

WHEREAS, they achieved their remarkable success by utilizing an extraordinary combination of explosive offense and stifling defense; the team averaged thirty-five points per game while allowing fewer than eleven points per contest; and

WHEREAS, the collective success of this remarkable squad was powered by outstanding individual performances throughout the season, including Justin Long's championship record of four touchdown passes that earned him recognition as Offensive MVP of the game; DeMarcus Stevens, a Mr. Football finalist, was equally impressive on defense in earning the award of Defensive MVP in the game; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Sports Writers Association placed DeMarcus Stevens, Chad Kennedy, and Justin Long on its All-State team, and the Associated Press named Stevens to its All-State First Team and Jam Fine, Justin Long, and Josh Nelson as Honorable Mention members; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his team's outstanding season and his development of a quality football program, Head Coach Buck Coatney was named Class AAA Coach of the Year by the TSWA; and

WHEREAS, the Falcons earned numerous awards as individuals, but the greatest honor they won was the one that they all received, the title of state champions; and

WHEREAS, the laudable young men who earned that honor were Seniors Tony Martin, Brandon Wilkerson, Tylon Gibson, Justin Long, Jason Johnson, William Lewis, Shaun Layne, Josh Nelson, Maurice Merchant, Brandon Bates, Chad Kennedy, Alan Burris, Daniel Mount, and DeMarcus Stevens; Juniors Jam Fine, Demarcus Matthews, Marques Patton, Charles Davison, Antonio Martinez, Jerimiah Alsup, Cecil Lee, T.J. King, Ryan Ferguson, Darren Dave, John Newman, Ryan Engl, and Willard White; Sophomores Ish Young, Chris Pitchford, Josh Freeney, Aaron Bunch, Travis Kemmler, Bradley Cooper, Ikey Lane, James Macon, Justin McDowell, Treven Capshaw, Tim Morris, Brandon Ke, John Burnette, Brandon Edington, Laray Ash, and Jamie Dechaine; and Freshmen Desmond Humphrey, Jaren Troutman, Curtis Johnson, Brandon Winters, Terry Minor, Dennis Freeney, Josh Hinch, Phillip Bates, Ashford Johnson, Dennie Rogan, Antonio Hamilton, Jamichael Mathis, Mark Brown, Chase Kennedy, and Sean Reilly; and

WHEREAS, Head Coach Buck Coatney and Assistant Coaches Bob Black, Rob Black, Mik Potter, Chad Smith, Jay Humphrey, Vince Lambdin, and Raymond Skeen laid the groundwork for the championship season by sharing their substantial knowledge of football with the young men on the team; and

WHEREAS, the football players at Fulton High School epitomize all that is good in today's student-athlete, as they have achieved the highest level of success on the gridiron while showing the highest degree of character both on and off the field; they inspired the student body and united their entire community in completing their remarkable 2003 season; and

WHEREAS, the dedication, determination, work ethic, and talent of this group of young men not only made possible a championship football season, but also surely bode well for their success in every future endeavor; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud the Fulton Falcons for winning the 2003 TSSAA Class AAA state football championship and serving as examples of the high quality of the youth of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this Body joins the administration, faculty, students, and community of Fulton High School in congratulating the Falcon coaches and players on their championship season and wish them every future success, both on and off the gridiron.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.